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# THE BAPTIST Record

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
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JUL 27 1999

## Doctor sharing life even in face of death

KAMPALA, Uganda (BP) — Moaning, horrible enough to stand a dog's hair on end, erupts from the ward at the end of the hallway.

White jacket shimmering in the dimly lit corridor, missionary doctor Larry Pepper heads toward the mournful sound.

He pushes open the medical ward's double doors. His gaze sweeps the beds in the room — all occupied — as he walks to the suffering woman's side.

Pepper, a teaching physician at Mbarara University Teaching Hospital in Uganda, is told the woman arrived the night before. Like so many others, she was brought in by her family as a last-ditch effort to save her life but it's too late to do more than ease her pain.

The missionary gives instructions to an intern and moves on to a patient waiting in another room. Diagnosing the man with ulcers, Pepper hands him a treatment filled with hope.

"As part of the prescription for medicine, I write out Scriptures. When they come back the next week, I ask them if they read it," Pepper explains.

Pepper is not only a physician; he is part of the team seeking to share the gospel with the Banyankore/Bakiga people of



SERVING THE GREAT PHYSICIAN — Southern Baptist missionary Larry Pepper, a teaching physician at Mbarara University Teaching Hospital in Kampala, Uganda, shares the good news of Jesus Christ with a patient. A former NASA flight surgeon, Pepper is part of a team seeking to share the gospel with the Banyankore/Bakiga people of southwestern Uganda. (BP photo by Matt Jones)

southwestern Uganda, the country's second-largest people group and the tribe of President Yoweri Museveni.

Just last year, the team started the first Baptist churches among this people group of approximately 1.5 million. Their desire to share eternal life

with a dying nation has launched several ministries with medical students and other faculty at the hospital.

The 39-year-old doctor's next stop is another ward across a courtyard. Pepper doesn't think Jane, a patient back for a third visit, will make it much longer. She is from the AIDS outpatient clinic he oversees Wednesday afternoons, the first such clinic begun at the hospital.

"We're doing something [other] AIDS organizations don't do by dealing with the spiritual aspect," Pepper says.

When Jane dies, Pepper takes comfort in knowing she has become a Christian. His efforts to give hope in the face of death have not gone by the wayside.

Later that morning, the moaning in the wards greets third-year medical students as they follow Pepper on rounds. Monday through Friday, they spend half their days learning at the bedside.

There they practice taking pulses and blood pressure — and thinking critically in order to make correct diagnoses.

Following Pepper on rounds teaches the students more than just medicine. He shows what it means to care — by his gentle touch on a woman's forehead as he questions her, by the way he looks each patient in the eye with respect, by the way his soft voice soothes a severely burned little girl.

"My job is to teach them by example how to be a Christian physician versus just a physician," he says.

His team seeking to share the gospel with the Banyankore/Bakiga people group is looking for a second general evangelist to join them.

Individuals who feel the Lord may be leading them to join the team or to consider other opportunities in East Africa may e-mail [initial.contacts@imb.org](mailto:initial.contacts@imb.org); write the Initial Contacts Coordinator, International Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond VA 23230-0767; or call toll-free (888) 422-6461.

## Prayer, fasting call fails

WASHINGTON (BP) — A resolution recommending government leaders call for a day of "solemn prayer, fasting and humiliation before God" failed in the U.S. House of Representatives for lack of a two-thirds majority.

The House voted 274-140 in favor of the non-binding resolution, but the measure required a two-thirds majority under the rule applied to the vote. Rep. Helen Chenoweth, R-Idaho, said she would consider asking for another vote under a rule requiring only a majority for passage.

"A strong majority of the House of Representatives support this measure, and that's good news," she said in a written release.

"Unfortunately, too many congressmen did not understand that this non-binding resolution is a simple recognition of the importance and need for prayer at this time, not a mandate to force anyone to do anything unconstitutional."

Rep. Chet Edwards, D-Texas, criticized the bill during floor debate June 29.

"Any effort by this Congress to inject a notion of... necessary duty upon how, when, and whether an American must pray is not only blatantly unconstitutional, it offends my deepest conviction that the sacredness of one's prayers and belief in God is that they are based on free will, not an imposed duty from government," Edwards said, according to an Associated Press article in The Washington Times.

The proposal, HCR 94, cited the shooting in schools as one of the reasons for recommending a day of prayer.

## Looking back

### 10 years ago

The William Carey College board of trustees releases a 56-page Miss. Baptist Education Commission report on conditions at the Hattiesburg-based college, along with 12 resolutions passed by the Carey trustees noting an immediate need for more money to implement needed corrections.

### 20 years ago

Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko opens for a full summer of camping — the first time in 10 years that Mississippi Baptist boys have had their own camping facility since Camp Kittiwake was destroyed in Hurricane Camille. The 360-acre tract was purchased in 1973 and includes an 18-acre lake.

### 50 years ago

Baptist Hospital in Jackson admits a record 3,298 patients during April, May, and June of 1949. The nursing school graduates 35 people in May and enrolls 36 in June. A nursing shortage is expected to continue, despite the 164 students now in training at the hospital.





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**D**ear Friend, it was great to receive a telephone call from you a few days ago, more than 26 years after our high school graduation and probably 20 years since we last talked. I won't use your real name because I don't want to embarrass you or place you in a spotlight where you may not feel entirely comfortable.

I know you to be the type of person who would shun public recognition for simply living your Christian faith every day, but I do want to share our conversation in the hope that Mississippi Baptists will be led to a clearer understanding of the lifetime impact they have on people like you and me and the crucial Kingdom work that is left to accomplish.

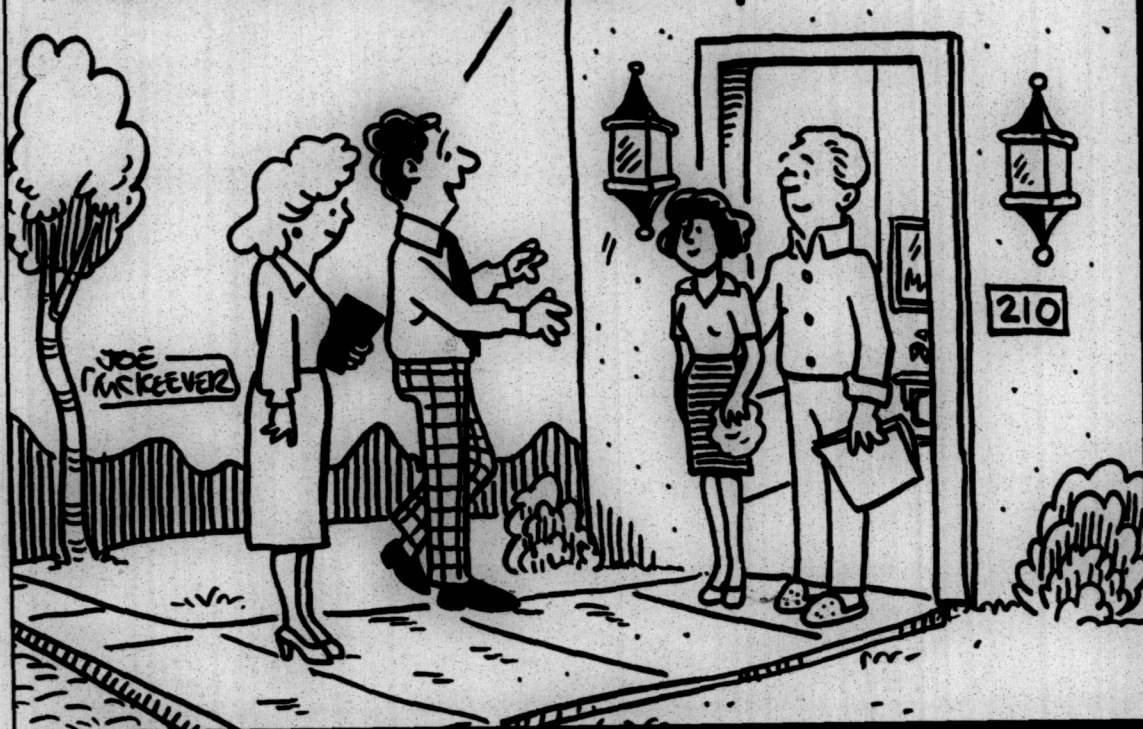
As we discussed, I will remember the day you walked the aisle of First Church, Belzoni, and made public your profession of faith in Jesus Christ. A lot of our social and school activities have gotten lost in the foggy recesses of my fading memory, but that's something not casually forgotten among friends.

**H. Jr.** Also not forgotten are the lessons about our Heavenly Father that together we learned at the feet of long suffering Sunday School teachers, Training Union directors, and Royal Ambassadors leaders. As I look back now, it seems obvious that their long suffering became even longer as we advanced into the years in which we confidently believed we knew so much more about life than our elders — the teen years.

Like the young people of today, our culture exerted a strong influence on us. Like the culture of today, our culture sought in every possible manner to lead us away from the Christian life. Some things don't change, but the moral and spiritual morass created by that culture does seem to have worsened greatly in the intervening years.

I can appreciate your confession that you haven't always lived a godly life since the time so long ago when our hopes and dreams for the future took us in separate directions. Living a godly life is a difficult feat in this evil world. It grieves me to report to you that I have also disgraced our Savior more times than I care to admit.

"MY WIFE AND I WANT TO WELCOME YOU TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD, INVITE YOU OVER FOR A BITE, HAVE YOU JOIN OUR CHURCH, AND WATCH YOUR LIFE BLOSSOM!"



Don't beat yourself up. We're not perfect, just forgiven.

That's one of the greatest glories of the Christian faith, isn't it? The God in which we believe — the all-powerful Creator of the Universe who abhors sin and demands justice for the destruction it causes — is also the Father who offers forgiveness for our unforgivable sins through his Son, Jesus Christ.

I rejoice that you have returned to your faith and immersed yourself so deeply in the life of your church. As far as we may have strayed, we always knew the road back home, didn't we? As much as we foolishly fought the truth, we always knew it wasn't going to change, didn't we?

I believe that's because of the unshakable foundation established so early in our lives by the people in our church who hung in there and loved and taught us when we were quite unlovable and virtu-

ally unteachable — and also by the Mississippi Baptists we never knew by name who gave so sacrificially to staff and maintain Camp Kittiwake, Gulfshore Assembly, Mississippi Baptist Youth Night, and so many other places and events that changed our lives forever.

I am who I am, and you are who you are, thanks in large part to those faithful people. It's a wonderful testimony that can be repeated an uncountable number of times across this state, this nation, and this world.

As proud as I am to have crouched shoulder-to-shoulder with you on the line of our high-school football team, as proud as I am to have been on the same all-star baseball team, as proud as I am to have attended Boy's State with you — nothing of this world will ever compare to the honor of referring to you as my brother in Christ for all eternity.

There are a lot of people to thank for that, and I praise God for every one of them.

**R**ecently I vacationed at my in-laws in Virginia, where I watched a fair amount of Christian television. Many of the programs were interesting, but I became bothered by a common theme voiced by several speakers: America is living on borrowed time, our society has fallen into the hands of the Evil One, and Jesus must come back for us because we are the only faithful ones left. It's as if they were saying, "God, you know that we alone are faithful and they are trying to eradicate us. What will you do without us? You might as well come back down here and get us."

Certainly Christians have much to worry us in the world around us. A quick reading of any newspaper or surfing of television channels is enough to stir depression within even the most optimistic of us, but the defeatist attitude that is so evident in much Christian thinking is, if I may say so, at best egocentric and at worst heresy!

Recently, I read in 1 Kings 19 where Elijah goes into the

## GUEST OPINION



*Desperately  
seeking Elishas*

By Gene Fant, Jr., member  
First Church, Jackson

wilderness and complains to God that he, Elijah, alone is faithful. In verses 9-18, God forces Elijah to listen for his voice, and in that voice Elijah hears a renewed call and the promise that help is on the way in the person of Elisha and 7,000 other faithful believers.

As a teacher of college students, I must look at that passage and rejoice that God is raising up a generation of Elishas. USA Today and CNN may not mention it, but God is moving mightily among our young people. Could you believe all of those college students whose pictures were in

the center-page pullout a few weeks ago in The Baptist Record. These students are volunteering their summers with very little remuneration learning how to minister in local churches all over our world. Did you know that the Baptist Student Union chapters at several of our Mississippi public universities are the largest student organizations on campus? (larger than the Young Politicians or the Greek fraternities!) At Mississippi College, we often run 400 in the weekly BSU gathering. My Sunday School class at First Church, Jackson, has over 200 students

attending on some Sundays. When I look into their faces on Sunday mornings and see them taking notes and praying so earnestly for God's movement in their lives, I can't help but get excited about the future for our nation.

The Gospel calls us to look at a world in crisis and rejoice that, in fact, the fields are white unto harvest. God always has a task for us, and while our understanding of the specifics of that task may change, the central goal of that task never changes. We are to change hearts, souls, minds, and lives with the love of Christ.

If we will seek out God's young Elishas, we can pass our mantles to them through prayer, mentoring, and encouragement. When we do, we will find that God has many glorious days ahead for all of us.

Fant is chair of the English Department at Mississippi College in Clinton. Mississippi College is affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention.



# WMU dedicates pair of Habitat houses

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor

Twin dedication services were held July 17 by the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) and Habitat for Humanity (HH) in the West Park neighborhood of Jackson, culminating a week-long building blitz and multiple ministry efforts billed as "Building West Park With Love."

The building blitz was part of a national WMU/HH project to build eight houses.

In addition to the building project, WMU sponsored a variety of ministry projects throughout the West Park area and coordinated with other organizations to provide additional services.

"We said from the beginning we were not only building two houses, but we were building the Kingdom of God," said Rebecca Williams of Gautier, Mississippi WMU president.

Sports camps featuring basketball, soccer, and tennis enrolled over 270 children and produced 19 professions of faith.

Teams going door-to-door delivered 1,130 bags with Bibles

Revival services on the evenings of July 16-18 in Poindexter Park produced 34 professions of faith.

A total of 106 individuals made salvation decisions, with 10 other decisions also recorded.

open to each one of you," said Georgia McGee, owner of the Magnolia Street home. "I am not just saying that to be nice, I mean it. When you come to Jackson, you have a place where you can stay."

There were two surprises at the dedication services. Harry Lambdin, president of HH Metro Jackson, Inc., revealed that the Jackson Habitat affiliate tithes the \$100 fee workers pay to be part of a project.

"Not only do those funds go toward building houses here, but we send 10% to HH International, designated to Honduras. You didn't just build two houses this week, you helped build four houses," he said to the applause of the workers and others gathered at the dedication.

The second surprise was revealed by Tammy Anderson, special project consultant for Mississippi WMU.

Calling both home owners forward, Anderson said, "We found out the houses are not air conditioned. This certificate is good for air conditioning when your house is ready, presented to you on behalf of the workers."

As the workers applauded, McGee began praising God while Madison finally shared tears of joy.

The money for the air conditioning units came from area churches, an anonymous benefactor,



**WELCOME HOME** — Harry Lambdin (right), president of the Habitat for Humanity's metro Jackson affiliate, presents a Bible to Delois Madison, on the porch of her new home built by WMU and Habitat volunteers. (Photo by Carl M. White)

"This has to be, by far, one of the most exciting projects in which WMU has ever been involved," said Kay Cas-sibry, Mississippi WMU executive director.

The homeowners for the two houses worked side-by-side all week with volunteer builders from in-state and out-of-state.

"When I met you on Sunday, I met you as strangers. Now I know you as friends," said Delois Madison, the owner of the home built on Fourth Street.

"I thank the good Lord for you and all you have done. I am going to save my tears for later, but you can be sure I am going to cry," Madison added.

"My door will always be

and the men and women who worked on the houses.

Lambdin indicated that the Jackson HH affiliate is one of the most effective in the United States. "We have built over 160 houses. This is a significant movement toward the elimination of substandard housing in the Jackson Metro area," he said.

"I would especially like to thank WMU — Kay Cassibry and Rebecca Williams — for pulling all of this together. There have been people here from Ala., Ga., Tenn., Ill., Ark., Texas, Mass., and Fla.; as well as Miss."



**THE  
SECOND  
FRONT PAGE**

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**MOVING IN** — Harry Lambdin (right), president of Habitat for Humanity's metro Jackson affiliate, presents a Bible to Georgia McGee on the porch of her new home built by WMU and Habitat volunteers. (Photo by Carl M. White)

and saw 34 professions of faith. Eleven churches involving almost 200 youth and adults conducted 10 Backyard Bible Clubs that enrolled 490 children and saw 17 professions of faith.



**PRAYER PAUSE**  
Volunteers at one of the houses built by Mississippi WMU and Habitat for Humanity join in the Lord's Prayer during dedication services on July 17. (Photo by Carl M. White)

## Miss. CP shows increase

Mississippi Baptists gave a total of \$2,503,606 through the Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) in June, according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which distributes the funds.

The June amount — second highest for the calendar year behind January's \$2,532,271 — brings 1999 total Mississippi Cooperative Program giving to \$14,103,745. The six-month total for this year is \$950,363, or 7.23%, more than the amount given in the same period of 1998.

Also, the January-June total is \$799,800, or slightly over 6%, more than the pro rata budget calls for. The pro rata budget is figured by taking the total 1999 Mississippi Cooperative Program budget of \$26,607,890, dividing by 12, and multiplying by the number of months elapsed.

The Mississippi Cooperative Program helps fund such programs as Mississippi Baptist Youth Night July 23-24 in the Mississippi Coliseum in Jackson; the Mississippi Acteens Convention July 23-25 at Alta Woods Church, Jackson; and the 1999 Growing Churches Conferences July 29-31 and August 6-7 at Gulfshore Assembly in Pass Christian.

## SBC CP records dip

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program (CP) receipts for June were down more than 13% while the fiscal year's total remained up nearly 6% compared to a year ago, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

For June 1999, CP receipts totaled \$13,033,978 compared to June 1998 of \$15,052,870, a decrease of \$2,018,892 or 13.41%. For the SBC fiscal year, October through June, CP gifts totaled \$125,813,026 compared to the previous year's total of \$119,129,676, an increase of \$6,683,350 or 5.61%.

Designated gifts for the month of June totaled \$14,603,670 compared to the same month in 1998 of \$14,824,922, a decrease of \$221,252 or 1.49%. For the year to date, designated gifts total \$138,919,559 compared to the previous year's total of \$137,598,745, an increase of \$1,320,814 or .96%.

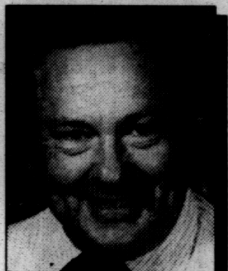
For the SBC's Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the June CP receipts exceeded the required budget monthly budget figure — \$12,917,143 — by more than \$116,834 or .90%. For the budget year to date, the required amount of \$116,254,292 was exceeded by more than \$9.5 million or 8.22%.



## Claude H. Fortenberry dies July 3

Claude Henry Fortenberry, former pastor, died July 3. Funeral services were held July 6 at Pine Grove Church in Ellisville.

During the 55 years of his ministry since age 14, Fortenberry has pastored churches in La., Ala., Calif., and Miss.



Fortenberry

Churches served in Mississippi include Cedar Grove, Edna, and Antioch in Marion County; Tillabota, Farmhaven, Society Hill, Kreole, Pine Grove, and Overt in Jones County; Ora and Sand Hill in Greene County.

Fortenberry helped organize Casas Adobes Baptist Church, Tuscon, Ariz., which now numbers over 6,000 in membership. He also was a trustee of the Nikolai Foundation, the parent organization of the Odessa Seminary, Odessa, Ukraine.

Survivors include his wife Margaret Ann Jordan Fortenberry; daughter, Judy Ann Anderson; son, Cliff Fortenberry; grandchildren, Lindsayann Anderson and Elizabeth and Ryan Fortenberry; brother, Robert Fortenberry; and mother, Kertie Oneal Hobgood Fortenberry.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Communication Department at Mississippi College for the Claude Henry Fortenberry scholarship award to be presented at the annual Honors Day program.

# Baptist father risks custody in morals fight

By Don Hinkle  
Baptist Press Correspondent

TUPELO, Miss. (BP and local reports) — A Southern Baptist father of three may soon lose custody of two of his daughters to his ex-wife and her lesbian partner in an emotionally charged case indicative of the legal battles across the nation over child custody rights between heterosexual and homosexual parents.

The case involving Clay McDonald, a longtime member of First Baptist Church, Tupelo, Miss., his daughters, ages 12 and 3, and his lesbian ex-wife is likely headed to the Mississippi Supreme Court and is drawing national attention from pro-family and pro-homosexual groups. McDonald's eldest daughter, age 16, lives with her mother.

"I am very shocked at the performance of the court system," said the dejected McDonald after a non-elected trial judge on June 25 ordered his youngest two daughters to join their older sister in going home with their lesbian mother and her live-in partner until an Aug. 3 custody hearing. McDonald had won custody of the two youngest daughters after his marriage ended in divorce in September 1997.

"This is indicative of how the gay agenda pervades every level of society, popular culture, law and government, and social services," said Rob Reiger, an analyst with the Family Research Council's cultural studies department. "It's a simple, common-sense fact that children need both a mother and a father, not two mothers and not two fathers. Our courts and government are losing site of that fact and the case in Tupelo is an example of it."

McDonald's divorce came following a two-year separation from his ex-wife in which she lived with a lesbian partner. Custody of the two youngest daughters took a strange turn earlier this year stemming from a similar case involving divorced heterosexual and homosexual parents.

The Mississippi Supreme Court denied an appeal by the American Civil Liberties

Union (ACLU) in February and refused to allow a 15-year-old boy to live with his gay father. However, in a little-noticed portion of the court's 6-3 decision, the justices ruled that orders prohibiting homosexual parents from visiting their children in the presence of their same-sex partners are illegal unless there is evidence that the partner's presence poses a threat of serious harm to the child.

McDonald's ex-wife, acting on the high court's decision, then took her visitation case to a Mississippi Chancery Court which lifted the restriction that prohibited her from visiting her two youngest daughters "in the presence of any person with whom she engages in homosexual behavior or activity." McDonald, who has always allowed regular visitation between his ex-wife and the two girls, interfered with visitation when he insisted on a form of identification from his ex-wife's lesbian partner when she arrived to pick them up.

For this he was ultimately held in contempt of court and it was during the contempt hearing that Chancellor William Griffin ordered the two distraught children turned over to their lesbian mother until the Aug. 3 hearing.

Members of Tupelo's First Church attending the contempt hearing tried to comfort McDonald's sobbing 3-year-old as she was taken from the courtroom, but they were ordered to stop by a bailiff who threatened to arrest them if they persisted, McDonald said.

"The baby was clinging to me," McDonald said. "It was just the kind of thing that just rips your heart out."

"It's a terrible situation," said Gayle

Alexander, pastor of the 1,700-member Tupelo church. "It's horrible when children are taken from one parent who is upright and given to one who is homosexual. To object on moral grounds is politically incorrect and it seems homosexuals are making headway in this area. It is a direction other than what God wants us to go. Homosexuality may ultimately be the straw that breaks our nation's back."

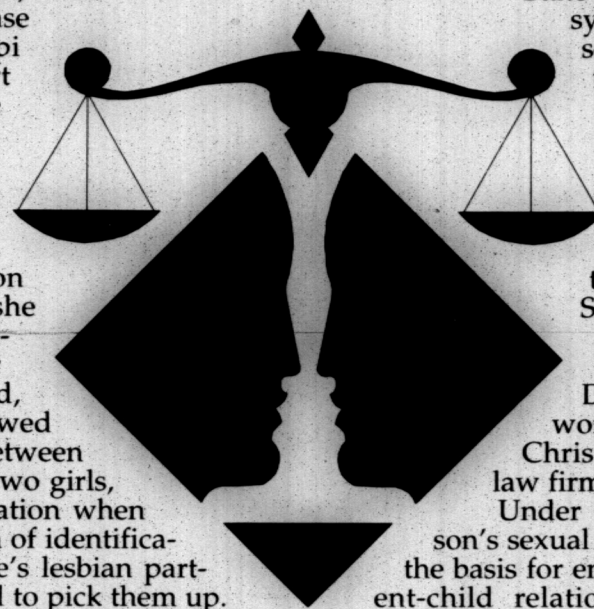
State agencies and courts sympathetic to homosexual desires for visitation rights, meanwhile, have come to apply a "best-interest-of-the-child" standard to decide more and more custody and visitation cases, said Duane Schmidt with the Scottsdale, Ariz.-based Alliance Defense Fund, a network of attorneys and Christian public-interest law firms.

Under this standard, a person's sexual orientation cannot be the basis for ending or limiting parent-child relationships unless it is demonstrated that it causes harm to the child.

Meanwhile, Clay McDonald prepares for yet another round of court battles that have already shackled him with more than \$25,000 in legal fees.

"I have found a great deal of comfort in God's Word," McDonald said. "It has given me guidance and self-control. The good Lord has a purpose for my life. I do think good people have been beaten down to where they think they have no voice on issues like these. It takes good people to take a stand on these things."

For more information on the case, contact David Dockery, III, at P.O. Box 1304, Clinton, MS 39060.



## Mississippi WMU celebrates first CWJC graduates

By Debbie Sills  
Mississippi WMU

The Northeast Mississippi Christian Women's Job Corp (NE-CWJC), a ministry of Mississippi Woman's Mission-

ary Union (WMU), held their first graduation ceremony in Tupelo on June 10.

Tina Floyd and Mable Kinerman, both of Tupelo are the first graduates of the program.

Program personalities

included Ralph Cain, director of outreach for Lee Association in Tupelo; Julie Busby, project coordinator; Trudy Johnson, CWJC director for national WMU; George Bogardus, advisory board chairman; Tammy Anderson, programs coordinator at Mississippi WMU; Jane Burns, associational WMU director, for Lee County; and Murene Clark, NE-CWJC program assistant.

Kinerman, who was trained as a phlebotomist and

emergency medical technician, experienced health problems which prevent her from lifting anything over 15 pounds. She had difficulty securing a job that would not interfere with her health. Kinerman learned of the ten-week CWJC program through her roommate.

"To me, CWJC means life, living, love, sharing, and open doors. When you can't find work and have all these bills to pay, you get depressed, but coming here to CWJC gives you hope. It's a place where people care no matter what color you are," said Kinerman who plans to one day return as a volunteer mentor.

She is working currently full-time at Lowe's Home Improvement Center in Tupelo and has plans to return to school to become a lab technician.

Floyd learned about the NE-CWJC from a local battered women's shelter. She has juvenile rheumatoid arthritis.

"CWJC gave me purpose and a center. It helped me let my kids know that Mom had it all together and had somewhere to go every morning and had someone to call on anytime we needed something."

"It is more than a job training program, it means friendship, support, and everything," she said.

CWJC was developed as a ministry of national WMU in 1993, with national WMU staff members interacting with impoverished women.

Staff members saw first hand how these women had been led to develop programs that helped women change their situations and helped them break the poverty cycle.

Pilot projects were officially begun in January 1996 with the purpose of providing a Christian context in which women in need are equipped for life and employment; and in a missions context in which women help women.

According to Trudy Johnson, there are now over 100 sites in nineteen states and 16 international sites. Mississippi currently has four sites established.

For more information, contact Tammy Anderson at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3323 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651. E-mail: tander-son@mbcb.org.



NEW GRADUATES — Celebrating the first graduation at the Northeast Mississippi Women's Job Corps (CWJC) June 10 in Tupelo were (from left) Julie Busby of Tupelo, project coordinator; Trudy Johnson of Birmingham, national CWJC director; Cathy Floyd of Tupelo, mentor for Mable Kinerman; Ralph Cain of Tupelo, Lee Association director of outreach; CWJC graduates Mable Kinerman and Tina Floyd, both of Tupelo; Tammy Anderson of Jackson, programs coordinator; and Joan Couch of Tupelo, mentor for Tina Floyd. (Miss. WMU photo by Debbie Sills)



# Largest journeymen's class commissioned

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (BP) — In one of the largest journeyman commissioning services yet, 114 college graduates accepted a challenge from the Southern Baptist International Mission Board (IMB) to take their callings and talents across the world to spread the Gospel.

Located near the sprawling national capital and historic home of the IMB in Richmond, Va., First Church in Alexandria, Va., was filled to capacity for the June 27 commissioning service.

"Who knows what God's aim is for you?" said Avery Willis, senior vice president of IMB overseas operations in the charge to the journeymen. "He's claimed you, he has a name for you, and he's going to reclaim you so you can proclaim his name."

Willis exhorted the journeymen to remember the Apostle Peter, whom Jesus used in spite of Peter's failures. In times of discouragement or personal shortcoming on the field, God can still use a faithful witness, he said.

"We'll be surprised afresh how God reclaims us," he said.

All 114 journeymen circled the sanctuary singing "Song for the Nations" as the closing hymn, and the congregation joined hands for the prayer of dedication and benediction.

Rob Darnell, from Raleigh, N.C., said he became interested in missions after a project in Africa. "It was the hardest six weeks

of my life, but I wouldn't trade it for anything," he said. "A fascination for missions just began to grow in my heart. ... It has become my heart's desire."

Darnell, who pulled out of seminary temporarily to become a journeyman, plans to serve in refugee camps in the Netherlands.

"Refugees are dying for friendship," he said. "It's hard for Americans to understand because there are no refugee camps here. You can see it in their eyes. They're begging for hope and a different life than the one they just left."

Not all journeymen had been expecting God's call, including two who will serve as strategy coordinator interns in Asia.

"It was a lot of breaking of myself and breaking of my will," said one journeyman, while another said, "God changed my heart and my desire for the area. He has been faithful to show me his hand in all of it."

These and several other journeymen cannot be identified because they will be serving in areas that are not open to Christian witness.

Journeymen are commissioned twice a year following a four-week orientation at the board's Missionary Learning Center in Rockville, Va., where they study cross-cultural relations and spiritually and emotionally prepare for their departure. Most of them will be leaving for their overseas assignments in the next few weeks.

Robert Shehane, who helps coordinate journeyman orientation, said the new workers are going more places and doing more direct missions than ever before. "We have all sorts of very creative ways in which journeymen go into restricted-access countries as teachers, agriculturists, language students, and more," he said.

These "Indiana Jones" assignments, as Shehane called them, have opened doors for evangelism overseas.

"Journeymen are going to continue to perform more front-line missions assignments," he said.



**JOURNEYMEN COMMISSIONED** — In one of the largest journeyman commissioning services yet, 114 college graduates accepted a challenge from Avery Willis of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board to take their callings and talents across the world to spread the gospel. (Photo by Suzanna Saadi)

## SWIMMING IN CIRCLES

One morning during the spring a friend was out on a lake fishing. He spotted a mother duck with her ducklings out for a "morning paddle." All of them seemed to be fine, but after a while he noticed that one of them had a problem. One of the baby ducks seemed to have been born with a deficiency — a deformity, and try as it might, all the duckling could do was swim in a circle.

Maternal instincts were certainly at work, for the mother stayed close by to guard and try to guide the little duckling,



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

but all of her efforts were not enough. She was torn between taking care of the rest of her brood and staying there to protect the poor, weak little duckling. Unable to do everything for all of them, in time she was unable to take care of

the deficient duckling, so she swam away.

Now entered the apparent hero — my fisherman friend. He boated out to where the little duckling was and began to make mental arrangements for the duck's future. He began to think of veterinarians or friends who might take in the duck, or maybe he could even keep it himself and try to feed, protect, and raise the little duckling.

Such optimistic dreams were not to be. He could not, and others either could or would not, take on a deficient and physically deformed, several-hours-old duckling and try to raise it.

In time, he could only do what the mama duck did and that was to leave it alone hoping that maybe something miraculous would take place.

In time he had to leave, for like the mother duck, he had other responsibilities that were calling for his attention. He drove away leaving the little duckling paddling around in a small circle in the middle of the lake.

You've seen these little ducklings, haven't you? They may work near you, or they may be kin to you, or they may be you. It is one of the dilemmas that all of us face in the Christian life — all of us who may be mother ducks, or shepherds, or just caring friends.

How do we reach out to help

those who may be deficient and unable to do much more than paddle in circles? How do we protect them, provide for them, and pull them along when they are not able or do not want to go along?

I suppose this is the way the disciples felt when they tried to bring Thomas along with them into the excitement of the resurrected Jesus. His response, as he paddled in the circle of his own disbelief and cynicism, was, "When I see the prints of the nails in his hands, and when I can put my hand into the hole in his side, I will believe!"

Try as they would, they could not get Thomas to understand or to join in their joy. It would take a great deal more than that and it always does. It would take a mighty work of God, a specific and life-changing revelation from Jesus and whether we like it or not, or are able to accept it or not, it still does.

We live in a "fix-it" world. Whatever goes wrong there has got to be some button we can push, some pill we can take, some decision that we can make that will change everything and life will come back into balance and everything will be OK.

That is a tragic fallacy in modern thinking, for the truth is that everyone of us has been rendered deficient, deformed, and even depraved by our sin.

Apart from the salvation God provides through his Son Jesus Christ, there is no solution, no hope, nothing to expect except "swimming in circles" in fear.

However, that need not be, for our wonderful Lord steps in from Heaven into our hearts to remove the fear, to redirect our lives, to protect us, and to fill us with his love.

## Heading for missions

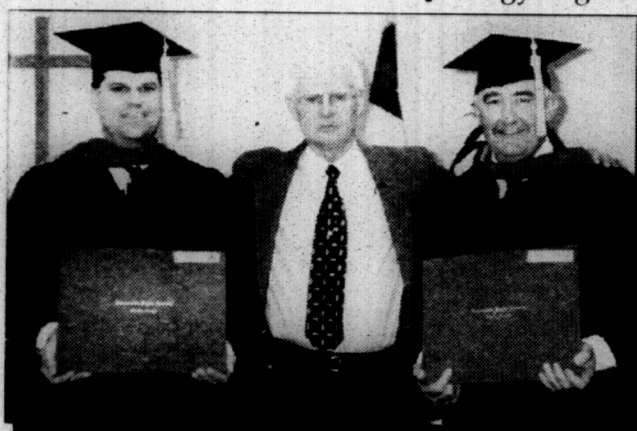


Juanita Schilling (right), secretary for Mississippi Association in Liberty, hands her boarding pass to Delta Airlines ticket agent Elizabeth Wright on June 16 at the Jackson International Airport, as she begins the first leg of a ten-day mission trip that will take her to Ukraine along with 21 other Mississippi Baptists. Ukrainian and Mississippi Baptists are in the initial year of a three-year partnership missions project. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



## NAMES IN THE NEWS

**Jeffrey D. Waldo and Terrell McGregor**, honor students, recently received master of theology degrees at Andersonville



Waldo, Hayes, and McGregor

Baptist Seminary, Camilla, Ga. Waldo, of Randolph, is pastor of Midway Church, Pontotoc Association. McGregor, also of Randolph, is pastor of Brewer Church, Lee Association. Pictured (from

left) are Waldo; Jimmy L. Hayes, president of the seminary; and McGregor.



**Friendship Church, Grenada**, licensed Curt Liles (left) and Adam Blair (right) to the ministry. Both are juniors at Mississippi College.



Lee, Pittman, and McElveen

**J. C. Pittman** (center), 88, was honored on June 13 by the members of Union Church, Tylertown, for his service as deacon. He retired from active service after attaining the age of 88. He has also served as

Sunday School director, Sunday School teacher, deacon, and chairman of the building and grounds committee. Pittman served as a deacon in 13 of the 14 churches of which he had been a member. He has served as a deacon for 65 years. Pictured with Pittman is Douglas Lee (left), interim pastor and Jerry McElveen (right), chairman of deacons.

**Jordan White**, a student at Southwestern Seminary, was recently licensed to the ministry by First Church, Water Valley. Pictured (from left) are Randy Bain, pastor; and White.

**Jimmy Sellers** is available for supply, interim, or bivocational pastorate. He can be contacted at 157 Padgett Rd., Magee, MS 39111, by calling (601) 849-9466, or by contacting Farris Smith, director of missions, Simpson Association.

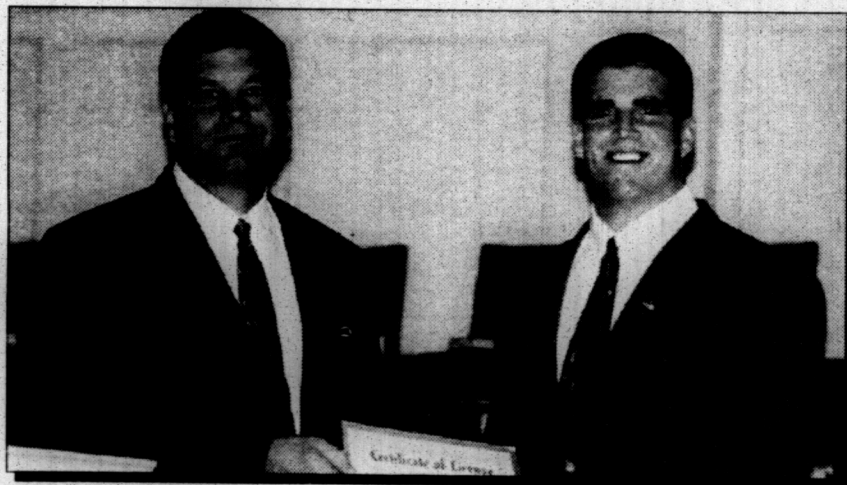


The Joneses

**Kenneth Jones** was honored at a reception for his retirement at Ephesus Church, Scott County, on June 27. Beginning his ministry at Ephesus Church in 1955, he served there for five years. Jones returned to Ephesus Church in 1970 and has served there for the past 29 years. He also pastored Hebron, Lauderdale County; Calvary, Warren County; and New Ireland, Newton County. Jones is available for supply and can be contacted at (601) 469-3795 or 3495 Ephesus Road, Forest MS 39074. Pictured with Jones is his wife Thenetia.



**Crowder Church, Crowder**, honored James Ray Waller as Deacon Emeritus in appreciation for dedicated years of service, on May 23. Pictured with Waller is Ben James, pastor.



Bain and White

## Staff changes

**Derma Church, Derma**, has called **Chris Aldridge** as pastor effective June 21. A native of Tupelo, Aldridge received his education at Blue Mountain College, New Orleans Seminary, and Midwestern Seminary. He previously served as pastor of New Hope Church, Amory.

**Pine Grove, Picayune**, has called **Hal Clark** as minister of students effective June 6. A native of McComb, Clark is a graduate of Mississippi College and is presently enrolled at New Orleans Seminary.

## HOMECOMINGS

**Parkway, Morton:** Aug. 29; 11 a.m.; dinner on grounds at noon; 1:30 p.m. singing; Jr. Richie, Pontotoc, guest speaker; James Pender, pastor.

**Magee's Creek, Jayess:** Aug. 8; Farris Smith, speaker; afternoon singing, Benny Graves and the Graves Sisters.

**Fernwood, Gulfport:** Aug. 8; 11 a.m.; dinner served following services. Dan Springfield, speaker; Sandi Springfield will present concert following meal; Bobby Morton, pastor.

**Tomnolen (Webster):** Aug. 1; starting at 10 a.m.; lunch will be served; J. B. Rowe, pastor.

**Pleasant Hill, Bogue Chitto:** Aug. 1; 11 a.m.; dinner in fellowship hall at noon; 1:30 p.m.

singing; John Smith, Brookhaven, guest speaker; Floyd F. Higginbotham, pastor.

**Hurley, Hurley:** July 25; Kenna Byrd, guest speaker; Breaux Tageant, pastor. For further information, call (228) 588-3435

**County Line, Dossville, (Attala):** July 25; 11 a.m.; meal in fellowship hall at noon; Kenny Culpepper, Ridgeland, guest speaker; Mark Pilgrim, pastor.

## MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

**BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC** is needed at Gunter Road Baptist Church. Send resumes to Dick Steadman, 1220 Gunter Road, Florence, MS 39073. Call 601-932-2542 or 601-939-2542.

**PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC** mail or E-mail resume to: Search Committee, Bethel Baptist Church, 2153 Bethel Road, Liberty, MS 39645 or oakknoll@telepak.net.

**PART-TIME MINISTER OF YOUTH** mail or E-mail resume to: Search Committee, Bethel Baptist Church, 2153 Bethel Road, Liberty, MS 39645 or oakknoll@telepak.net.

**PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC.** Send resume to: Music Search Committee, c/o Eastwood Baptist Church, P.O. Box 466, Indianola, MS 38751. Call 601-887-4404.

**PART-TIME MUSIC MINISTER.** Sunday is only day of service required. Out-of-town applicants welcomed. Weekend accommodations will be provided. Send resume to: Providence Baptist Church, c/o Nina Taylor, 301 Fayette Davis Avenue, Cleveland, MS 38732.

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Complete Renovations

**1-800-654-1294**  
Jackson, MS 601-957-8844

## CLASSIFIED ADS

RATE: 60 cents per word, \$6 minimum. Cash with order except on contract advertising. Include name, address, zip code, and phone number in word count. No blind ads. **ONLY WRITTEN ADS ACCEPTED.**

**CFI — PEWS, NEW & used.** Baptistries, steeples, & stained glass, MS & ALA. 1-800-830-0583.

**WE SPECIALIZE IN VANS** Featuring 6 to 15 passenger vans, customized and panel vans. Daily and weekly rates. Auto & Truck Rental, Jackson (601) 948-3391. Since 1965.

**CHURCH RETREAT OPEN YEAR ROUND.** Panama City Beach, Florida. Choice dates available this summer. Reasonable rates, modern dorm facilities, 300 ft. from Gulf of Mexico. A ministry of First Baptist Church 1-850-234-0488 for details. Website: www.fbcpcb.com E-mail address: fbcpcb@panacom.com.

**SUMMER VACATION HOUSE** available to Christian families, weekly rate savings. 3 BR on Panama City Beach, 1/2 block from Gulf. For details call First Baptist Church Panama City Beach, Florida. 1-850-234-0488. Website: www.fbcpcb.com E-mail address: fbcpcb@panacom.com.

**FULL-TIME PASTORATE AVAILABLE.** Send resume to South Lake Charles Baptist Church, Attention: Pastor Search Committee, 4505 Lake Street, Lake Charles, LA 70605.

**CUSTOM STAINED GLASS** windows for churches and homes. Stained Glassworks, Inc. 1-800-605-2970.

**BRANSON, MO CONDO** sleeps 6. Stay 3 nights, 4th night free or stay 5 nights and 2 nights free. Free in house coffee and tea. Free dinner tickets for stays on birthdays or anniversaries, \$100.00 daily. Register for free return trip and 3 king quilts. 601-746-4632.

**ALASKA CRUISE WITH DR. CHARLES STANLEY** for July 11- 18, 2000. Deadline August 1, 1999. Call Rev. Jon Nichols at (601) 939-2975 for details.

**YOUTH OUTINGS?** Outdoor paintball games! Year-round! 10 years experience. Book yours today! Curry Creek Outdoors, 1161 Old Hwy 49, Seminary, MS 39479, (601) 722-9000.

**FLORIDA BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOME** — Tallahassee needs a husband-wife team to be primary residential staff for the girls home. Excellent salary/benefits. Work for 2 weeks on duty, 1 week off. Come minister in the lives of children! Call Pam at 1-850-878-1458.

**WE ARE RENOVATING!!** Sanctuary furniture must go! Please call 228-475-6660.

**CHOIR DIRECTOR NEEDED:** Full-time position available at Baddour Center, Senatobia, Mississippi, for director of renowned 22-member traveling choir, The Miracles. Baddour Center is a Christian ministry to adults with mild and moderate mental retardation. Contact Gena Lott, 662-562-9666, ext 301, or fax 662-562-6979.

**SMALL CHURCH NEEDS ONE MILLION** Campbell's labels for van used with Spanish and Ethiopian Missions plus Youth and Seniors. Send to: Wellwood Baptist Church, 5101 North Rome Avenue, Tampa, FL 33603.

**FOR SALE:** 1993 Metrotrams Mini-Bus, 25 passenger — Rear and front A/C — Ford 460 EFT Engine, \$25,000 — Mileage 90,000. Phone 601-763-7571.

**CHURCHPAGES.COM** — Now with new QuickStart. Your church, whether large or small, can now have a website. Easy templated pages. Just need your church's information. We create, maintain, and update site for you. Only \$100 one time setup, plus \$15 per month maintenance. A ministry service of Paul & Carla Mason, ...to help create a larger presence for the Lord on the Internet." Go to www.churchpages.com to see, or call (601) 373-5300.



What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

July 22, 1999

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

## Family to Family

*A way for hurried families  
to find significance  
by discovering and living  
God's purpose for their  
families.*

### Awareness Conferences

#### FAMILIES MAKING A DIFFERENCE

##### LOCATIONS

August 16 (Monday)	FBC, Batesville, (601) 563-7655
August 17 (Tuesday)	FBC, Columbus, (601) 323-3915
August 30 (Monday)	FBC, Laurel, (601) 649-5710
August 31 (Tuesday)	McLaurin Heights BC, Pearl (601) 939-3379

##### SCHEDULE

6:30 p.m. Supper (free)	RSVP to host churches
7:15 p.m. Presentation-Family to Family	
8:30 p.m. Adjourn	

##### PURPOSE

*To inspire and equip families to be on mission through sharing their Christian faith.*

##### FELT NEEDS ADDRESSED

- Families are stressed and hurried—they long for meaningful time together.
- Families lack a sense of purpose and biblical significance.
- Parents are failing to pass the baton of their faith in Christ on to the next generation.
- Eighty-eight percent of the students who grow up in evangelical churches leave at age 18 and do not come back.
- Church programming and family priorities often oppose rather than complement one another.

##### PARENTS WILL LEARN HOW TO

- Prioritize their lives to spend quantity and quality time together
- Pass the baton of faith in Christ on to the next generation
- Reduce the stress of everyday family life
- Develop a family mission statement
- Build relational bridges through ministering to others
- Cross relational bridges to share their faith in Christ in a non-threatening way

*For more info, contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department, MBCB, (601)968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651*

Sponsored by: North American Mission Board, Discipleship and Family Ministry Department, Evangelism Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, Jim Futral, Executive Director-Treasurer

## Trilogy

### CONFERENCE

#### God on Mission in Our World

August 9, Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Jackson

*A conference for anyone seeking God and to know  
His will, desiring to be like Christ, and discovering  
the work of the Holy Spirit. Join this trio for a  
life-changing experience!*



**Robertson McQuilkin** - Follow as McQuilkin leads you up the spiral to a Spirit-filled life to move you into a closer relationship with Jesus Christ. Discover how the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit transforms lives and impacts your life as a disciple of Jesus. As a Christian our relationship with God and our walk can make a difference in this world.



**Richard Blackaby** - Feel the warmth and personality as you hear Blackaby. You will be encouraged as he shares how he has relied on God in his spiritual journey. Hear him reveal how God speaks and how you can seek, find and accomplish the will of God for your own life. Know the richness of how Christ, as the head of the body, can inspire spiritual awakening in our lives



**T.W. Hunt** - Come walk in the high country with Hunt, master teacher of The Mind of Christ. This is a man of God whose life and ministry exemplifies Philippians 2:5, "Let this mind be in you, which was also Christ Jesus." Hear how he came to know the mind of Christ through his pilgrimage as he made Jesus Lord of his life of which he said, "I have no regrets." Stand apart from the world today as you become like Christ, emulating His life and thinking the thoughts of Christ.

##### Conference Schedule, Monday, August 9

2:00 - 3:00 p.m.	Registration, Bookstore Open
3:00 - 3:30	Worship Music, Welcome, Introductions
3:30 - 4:30	Richard Blackaby
4:30 - 6:30	Break for Dinner at local restaurants, Bookstore Open
6:30 - 6:45	Worship Music
6:45 - 7:45	T.W. Hunt
7:45 - 8:00	Worship Music, Stand up Break
8:00 - 9:00	Robertson McQuilkin
9:00 - 9:15	Call for Commitment
9:15	Conference Concludes, Bookstore Open

There is no  
Conference Fee

For registration  
info, contact Joseph  
Northcut  
(615)251-5624  
Please register 1-2  
days in advance

Co-sponsored by the

Discipleship and Family Ministry Department



# G•R•O•W

## Outreach Teams That Win: G.R.O.W.

August 30, 7-9 p.m.  
Central Baptist Church, Meridian

(formerly South Side Baptist Church) 2511 C Street  
From I-20, take the 22nd Ave. exit, go north on 22nd Ave., turn left on  
C Street, go 3 blocks and church is on the left.

### Leader: Jerry Tidwell

Author and developer of *Outreach Teams That Win: G.R.O.W.*

For more info contact the Sunday School Department, MBCB  
(601)968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651

No pre-registration required  
No cost for the conference  
No child care provided

"G.R.O.W." is based on Dr. Tidwell's phenomenally successful outreach approach. Under this proven-effective plan church members are asked to commit just one evening each month to outreach...with several different avenues from which they can choose. You will not want to miss this opportunity!

Jerry Tidwell is the pastor of West Jackson Baptist Church, Jackson, Tenn. He

has a bachelor of science in secondary education from the University of North Alabama, a master of divinity and doctor of ministry from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. The churches he has pastored include: Garner Baptist Church in Weatherford, Tex.; Santo First Baptist Church in Santo, Tex.; Grace Baptist Church in Tullahoma, Tenn.

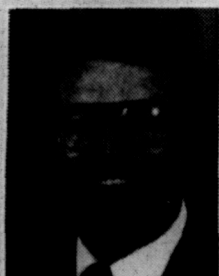


## Worship in the New Millennium

A conference for all worship leaders

August 13, 1999  
Baptist Building, Jackson

8:30	Registration	
9:00	Welcome	
9:15	Session I	What is Really Essential in Worship?
10:30	Session II	Planning for Worship—Predictable Routine or Creative Opportunity?
11:30	Session III	What Church Musicians Should Know about Pastors What Pastors Should Know about Church Musicians
12:00	Lunch	
1:00	Session IV	Workshop in Worship Planning (working in small groups)
1:45	Session V	Discussion of "Sample" Worship Services
2:45	Session VI	Avoiding the "Worship Wars"
3:30	Open Forum	Responding to the Day
4:00	Adjourn	



Gary Furr



Milburn Price

### State Worship Conference Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Church \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Position \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Fee: \$20** (includes conference fee, book and lunch)  
Make check payable to: **Mississippi Baptist Convention Board**  
Mail check and registration form by **August 6** to:  
**Church Music Department**  
**Worship Conference**  
**P. O. Box 530**  
**Jackson, MS 39205-0530**

## WMU Church Leadership Training

July 26-29

### Camp Garaywa

Age-Level and Special Interest  
Conferences Available!  
No Registration Fee Required  
Light Refreshments Provided

#### Monday

6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

#### Tuesday

10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. &  
6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

#### Wednesday

10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

#### Thursday

10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. &  
6 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Watch for coming details on the  
**Missions Explosion**  
**August 20-21**  
**Camp Garaywa**

For more info contact the WMU Department, MBCB  
(601)968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651





**July Guest Speaker**  
Roy Edgemon, director of  
Discipleship and Family  
Ministry, LifeWay Christian  
Resources



**July Guest Musicians**  
Gordon and Donna Alford,  
minister of music, First  
Baptist Church, Vancleave

# 1999 Growing Churches Conferences

Equipping Church Leaders for the 21st Century

## Growing Churches Through Discipleship July 29-31

Seminars on total church growth with an emphasis on  
Discipleship and Family Ministry.

## Growing Churches Through Bible Study August 6-7

Seminars on total church growth with  
an emphasis on Sunday School.

Both Growing Churches conferences at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly include:

### Six Study Sessions led by Specialists

representing  
Discipleship and Family Ministry,  
Sunday School, Men's Ministry, WMU,  
Pastoral Ministry, Evangelism,  
Church Media Library,  
Missions Extension and Stewardship.

### Dynamic Worship Services

- Special guest worship leaders for the  
Discipleship weekend include Roy Edgemon  
and Gordon and Donna Alford
- The Bible Study conference will feature multi-  
media and the use of creative worship

Each conference is a presentation of the

TeamKID Clubs for All Children

TeamKID Clubs for Older Preschoolers

Demonstration Lab School for Younger  
Preschoolers

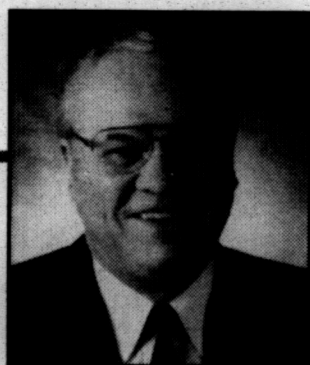
Discipling Bible Study for Youth

Family Time on Friday Afternoons

Fellowship Time on the Pier Friday Evening

For reservation information, contact Frank Simmons, manager, Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, 100 First Street, Pass Christian, MS 39571-3299, Tel: (228) 452-7261, Fax: (228) 452-7263

# Baptist Doctrine Study 2000



*Dr. Roy T. Edgemon*

## Foundations of the Faith: The Doctrines Baptists Believe

Preview and Brunch  
9 a.m. - noon

Gulfshore Baptist Assembly  
Camp Garaywa  
Central Hills Baptist Retreat

January 31, 2000  
February 1, 2000  
February 3, 2000

Discipleship and Family Ministry Department, MBCB  
601-968-3800 or 1-800-748-1651

"Helping to Bring Mississippi and the World to Jesus"

# 1999

## Professional Certification for Ministry Assistants and Ministry Office Skill Shops

Camp Garaywa, Clinton



### PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION

**August 17-19, 1999**  
NELL COLLINS, certified church  
secretary instructor for LifeWay  
Christian Resources, and admin-  
istrative assistant, First Baptist  
Church, Longview, Tex.



### MINISTRY OFFICE SKILLSHOPS

**August 17-19, 1999**  
GLENDA SUGGS, certified church  
secretary instructor for LifeWay  
Christian Resources, and ministry  
assistant, Mt. Vernon Baptist  
Church, West Monroe, La.

Church Administration-Pastoral Ministries Department  
1-800-748-1651 or 601-968-3800



## Pray this day for...

July 23 - Aug 5, 1999

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY

### It All Depends On Prayer

*"Without Prayer, the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, which is God's Word, have no power. All depends on prayer. May God teach us to believe this and to hold fast!"*

by Andrew Murray

In March, Rebecca Boston, missionary to Chile, requested prayer for a family that had opened their home for a Bible study. This family has invited two couples who are friends of theirs to join them. Please pray that these couples will have a spiritual hunger and openness to study the Bible.

Day of Prayer for World Peace (Christian Action Commission Emphasis). Officially 2.3% of the population in India are Christians but the actual number is much higher, possibly as high as ten percent. Pray that India will elect a new government that values human life and religious freedom.

For Church and Associational Leadership training, Camp Garaywa (WMU); Royal Ambassador/Challenger Camp, Central Hills Retreat (Men's Ministry); Young Musicians Camp, Blue Mountain College (Church Music).

For Baptist Building Staff Planning Week. Pray for the six Baptist groups as they work together in establishing a model church in Toronto, Canada. The First Baptist Church, Jackson, sent a youth choir and several adults to Toronto in May for special evangelistic meetings.

The Baptist Children's Centre ministers to orphans and street children in Kenya. Missionary Jill Branyon asks us to join her in praying as important decisions must be made concerning the continuation of the center. Pray that the lives of these children will be changed and that God will use them to reach out to others.

Pray for the 22.2 million people residing in North Korea, an area the size of Louisiana. Religious freedom is guaranteed in the North Korean Constitution but actually suppressed. The major religion is cult worship of Kim Il-sung (the first ruler of the communist government). Less than 1% are Christians.

Baptist reps serving on the Refugee Ministry Team in the Netherlands ask us to pray for teenagers who are alone in the Netherlands with no family. One teenage girl had her mother die when she was a baby and, within the past year, saw her father killed because he would not renounce his Christian faith.

Missionaries Mark and Debbie Fricke in Guatemala City, ask us to pray for a teenager who accepted Christ in June. He comes from a gang situation and is being persecuted for his belief in Christ. Pray that he will stand firm in his faith and share the gospel with his family and former friends in the gang.

For I Growing Churches, Gulfshore Assembly (Mississippi Baptist Convention Board); Church Media Library Conference, Gulfshore Assembly (Broadcast Services). Join the Christians in Mahi of Benin in praying for a new church start in the village of Chalo.

Mary Dolvin works with Georgia Baptist literacy missions in Norcross, Ga. Pray that more leaders will be trained as literacy missions associates for the WMU emphasis on literacy, 2000 to 2002. Pray for those at the NAMB who will help with the Georgia Baptist Literacy Conference, October 8-10.

For Baptist Youth Night, Jackson (Mississippi Baptist Convention Board); Mississippi Acteens Convention, Jackson (WMU). A village chief, who has been instrumental in opening doors to many Dagaari regions in Burkina Faso, is failing in health. Pray that God's will be done in healing him so that His name will be glorified.

For Baptist Youth Night (identical program as on 23rd), Mississippi Coliseum, Jackson (Mississippi Baptist Convention Board); Ill Centrifuge, Gulfshore Assembly (LifeWay Christian Resources)

Rafael Blanco is a Messenger of the Word pastoring Hendersonville Hispanic Mission, Hendersonville, Tenn. Pray that Hispanic people living in that area can be reached for Christ.

For IV Centrifuge, Gulfshore Assembly (LifeWay Christian Resources). Pray for a young man and his wife who have fled their village in Myanmar because of their outspoken witness. Pray that in their new village, they can share their faith in safety and that people will respond to Christ's message.

## Take a moment to send a card to encourage the children of our missionaries!

2-87

MISS LAURA WEBB

Azcueraga 297, 3100 Parana, E.R., ARGENTINA  
Parents: Elvin & Janet, General Evangelism

6-84

MR. JOHN FOX

Visanai Biserica Baptist, Str. SF. Nicolae 80,  
Beltsy 279200 MOLDOVA

Parents: Thomas & Tammy, General Evangelism

9-95

MISS EMILY HEWITT

3331 Old Canton Road, Jackson, MS 39216

Parents: Earl & Mona, Medicine  
SERVE IN WEST AFRICA

11-82

MISS ARIEL AUSTIN MASSEY

8711 Echo El Paso, TX 79904

Parents: Gregor & Karen, Music Promotion  
SERVE IN MIDDLE AMERICA

18-78

MISS SUMMERS DUNAWAY

WCC, P. O. Box 1205, Hattiesburg, MS 39401

Parents: Philip & Lara, Theological Education  
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22-87

MR. KYLE JONES

4, bis, Grande Rue, 54420 Saulxures-les-Nancy, FRANCE

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25-79

MR. RYAN KYZAR

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Parents: Music Promotion, SERVE IN RUSSIA

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Apartado 207, Huaraz, PERU

Parents: Steve & Vidonia Smith, General Evangelism

27-83

MISS AMY K. LEE

52-31 Matsumidai, Ikoma-shi, 630-02, JAPAN

Parents: Henry & Linda, General Evangelism



# HOUSE TOPS



## JUST FOR THE RECORD



**East McComb Church, McComb,** held its Senior Adult Recognition Day on May 16 with a catered luncheon. Receiving awards (pictured, from left) were Lela Fisher, oldest member; Beth White, telephone ministry; Mary Joyce Slater, nursing home ministry & senior adult choir pianist; Addie White, trip coordinator; Hilda Stovall, EMBC member since 1921; Nell Rose Guyton, teaching Sunday School for 43 years consecutively and married 62 years (the longest) to Wood Guyton; (back row) Renee Hancock, director of education & senior adults; Jack Blailock nursing home ministry; J. L. Slater; Ellinee White, organizer of "Keenagers" in 1975; and Ricky Kennedy, pastor.

**James Young Chapter of RAs at Corinth Church, Simpson Association,** received their pins recently in a recognition service. Pictured are Aaron Walker, Kevin White, Stan Green, James Weathersby, Tyler Williamson, Wade • Mitchell, Robert Stewart, Gabriel Alvarey, Adam Blair; (leaders) Calvin Blair, Kenny Stewart, Larry Bynum, and Willie Johns. Dean Stewart is pastor.



RAs of Corinth Church, Simpson Association

### Colonial Heights Baptist Church presents



Monday, August 9  
7:00 pm

Colonial Heights Baptist Church  
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**First Church, Terry,** exceeded its goal of \$1,000 for the Baptist Children's Village Love Offering by giving a final total of \$1,182.52. John H. Pace Jr. is pastor.

**Old Union Church, Shannon,** will observe Memorial Day on Aug. 1. A covered dish lunch will be served at noon. Kenneth Kelly is pastor.

**Shiloh Church, Oxford,** experienced revival at its youth retreat, June 24-26. Twenty nine teenagers attended the retreat, 11 were saved and two rededicated their lives. David Thomas is pastor.



Note burning at Antioch Church, Union

**Antioch Church, Union,** held a note burning ceremony for its church and education buildings on June 27. Taking part in the ceremony are (from left) Wayne Bishop, minister of music; Nancy Joyner; Jeanetta Rigdon; Sam Boler; Stanley Bishop; Bill McKinion; and James Young, pastor.

**Acteens, GAs, and Mission Friends of North Morton Church, Morton,** got together for a ministry project for Mississippi Care Center (nursing home) in Morton. Wreaths were made for the residents.



Mission organizations of North Morton Church, Morton

### VBS dates

**Gunter Road, Florence:** July 25-28; 6:30-8:15 p.m.; Molenda Martin, director; Gene Jordan, pastor.



Recently a group of men from Flowood Church, Brandon, worked with the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Metropolis, Ill. They helped construct additional classrooms for the church. Pictured (from left, front row) are Bobby Moore, Ricky Gray, Carlos Langford, David Westerfield; (standing) Myron Sistruck, Bill Dunigan, Ken Blakeney, Billy Little, Don Havard, Freddie Lang, and Nick Whittington. Gray is pastor.



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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Youth Night autograph party cancelled

The autograph signing party scheduled at the Jackson LifeWay Christian Store (formerly the Baptist Bookstore) after the Friday, July 23 evening session of the Mississippi Baptist Youth Night, has been cancelled. For more information, contact Matt Buckles, Youth Night Committee chairman, at (601) 292-3305 or toll-free in Mississippi (800) 748-1651.

## MOVED BY ARTICLE

Editor:

I was very impressed and moved by a recent article I read in your paper. It was seen in the July 1 edition, and was written by Jim Futral. He gave a very good rendition of how he assumed something that wasn't. It was under the heading of A Chicken's Foot. I have seen things in the past that have drawn conclusions that just weren't true and many people can be hurt in the process. I hope that many people read that article and were as moved as myself. As a church secretary, I have been exposed to many opportunities to draw conclusions on partial information. As a Christian, I am reminded how very important it is to view everything with complete and factual information. This is a very important part of everyday life in and out of the church. Keep up the good work of your paper. I look forward to reading it every week.

Janice Pelletier  
Grand Bay, Alabama

## GAMBLING DESTROYS

Editor:

This article is in response to the editorial of June 17 by our good editor William Perkins, relating to the problem of gambling. He covered it well. I just have a few thoughts on the subject.

My problem here is that I do not believe our pastors are speaking out on the subject, condemning what it is doing to our youth and adults alike. We must keep in mind that (gambling) is a legal institution set up by our elected officials.

Maybe we have a different

breed of lawmakers and so-called pastors. Even those who call themselves evangelists ignore the problem as though it is not happening.

The ball is in the pastors' hands. What will they do with it? I have no apology for these thoughts. The hour is late.

In John 21:15-17 we read, "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these: He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

I have to believe Jesus is saying to our good pastors and we lay people today, "Go feed my sheep concerning the horrible case of gambling that is destroying so many of our sheep."

Tom Walden  
Jackson

## TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP

Editor:

Thank you for your thought-provoking editorials each week. In response to your comments about the low attendance at the SBC this year and modern technology, I would like to request that there be some way for members in distant sites to vote on

issues presented at the convention. It seems unfair that 11,000 could decide issues for over 14,000,000. Some of us are unable to attend. I'll have to depend on the technologists to decide how it could be done.

Beverly Barclay  
Walls, MS

and others giving yourselves for sharing, teaching gospel of Jesus Christ and his love to those who don't know or understand. Let's pray each day for these, their lives may just depend on it.

Barbara Peterson  
Carrollton, Alabama

## SEEKING PRAYERS

Editor:

The Western Europe Region of the International Mission Board (IMB) is seeking churches with intercessory prayer ministries, mission groups, seminaries, and/or individuals with access to e-mail who might be interested in partnering in prayer for the ministries of more than 250 missionaries serving in this developed, affluent, yet very spiritually dark area of our world. If you are interested in receiving regular, up-to-date prayer requests, please contact me at DEBBIEK-COX@compuserve.com.

Debbie Cox  
IMB regional prayer coordinator, Germany



Mississippi College

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Church: \_\_\_\_\_

Handicap or Average Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration deadline in Friday, July 30, 1999



Ron M. Power, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

## LifeAnswers

*I've been divorced for three years and am ready to begin building a new relationship. However, there doesn't seem to be any organized singles groups in my area where I can meet Christian women. Any suggestions?*

Ask the Lord to begin preparing you for the right woman — as he is preparing her to meet you. Go about your daily routine and be alert to what the Lord provides. Panic often gives way to quick decisions that can lead to poor commitments. You want the best, don't you? Isn't the best worth waiting for? Our society's philosophy is to get it now and don't delay, but this is damaging advice when it comes to relationships. In the meantime, be available for God to use you in many opportunities of service in

your church and community. Avail yourself of Christian conferences for singles. Check with your local Baptist association or the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board to find out about future single events, and watch this newspaper for announcements of such events. As you focus on your walk with the Lord, you will have spiritual eyes to discern what is the best gift from God — and not to settle for what is not his best for you.

*I am writing in response to the letter written by the minister's wife in the June 24 edition of LifeAnswers. My husband is a minister and I too was frustrated with the amount of time he spent at the church. As a former youth minister I should have understood, but as his new wife I craved his attention. Fortunately, we*

*were able to talk. I told him I felt as though pleasing church members was more important to him than spending time with me. He said he felt I was not supporting his ministry. As we shared our feelings, I realized I should be more supportive of him — and he admitted that he needed to spend more time with me. These past few months have been wonderful! He has learned to say "no" to people, I have learned to commend him when he goes out of his way to spend time with me, and I finally see his need to feel the support of his wife in his ministry. All married couples need open communication. I'm so glad my husband and I learned that lesson early in our marriage.*

Keep up the good work. Your church and your future children will rise up and call you blessed!

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.



## REVIVAL DATES

**Liberty, Raleigh:** July 25-28; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Jerry Sullivan, former pastor of First Church, Raleigh, evangelist; "Hosanna," music; Jeff Mann, pastor.

**First of Runnelstown, Petal:** July 25-30; Sunday, Sunday School, 9 a.m., worship, 10 a.m., followed by dinner in fellowship hall; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Billy Murphy, evangelist; Ronnie Cottingham, music; Henry Freeman, pastor.

**Shiloh, Foxworth:** July 25-28; Sunday, 11 a.m., dinner on grounds, and 6 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Randal Creel, Meridian, evangelist; Larry Lott, Columbia, music; Mack Carney, pastor.

**Tyro (Northwest):** July 25-28; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m. each evening; Tom Hood and Marcus Laughlin, leading services; Gary Newton, pastor.

**Harmony, Brookhaven:** Aug. 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. with Phillip Hemby, speaker; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Mon., Kent Cochran; Tues., Johnny Sykes; Wed., Malcolm Massey; John Swain Lambert, guest pianist; Melissa Ethridge, music leader; Clarence Young, interim pastor.

**Beulah, Decatur:** July 25-29; Sunday, 10:50 a.m., fellowship meal, and 6:50 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Johnny Collins, Neshoba, evangelist; Scott Vaughn, BSU director, East Central Community College, music; Byron Howell, pastor.

**Good Hope, Batesville:** July 25-28; Sunday, regular morning services and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:30 p.m.; John Grey, Grenada, evangelist; Duke Barnes, Cleveland, music; Billy Floyd, pastor.

**Conehatta, Conehatta:** July 25-29; 7 p.m. nightly; Frank Harmon, evangelist; Gary Thorne, music.

**Liberty Hill, Pope:** Aug. 1-5; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7:30 p.m.; Marvin Cox, director of missions, Union County Association, speaker for Sunday; Bryan Bailey, Oxford, speaker for Tues.-Thurs.; James L. Bailey, pastor.

**Crowder, Crowder:** Aug. 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 10 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Kermit McGregor, Mendenhall, evangelist; L. Graham Smith, Clinton, music; Ben James Jr., pastor.

**Sallis, Sallis:** July 25-30; Sunday, 11 a.m., covered dish meal, and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Jerry Smith, Water Valley, evangelist; Thomas Wicker, pastor.

**Monument Drive, Tupelo:** Aug. 1-4; 7 p.m.; Don Baggett, Belden Church, Belden, evangelist; Eddie Wilhite, East Heights Church, Tupelo, music; Tommy Tackett, pastor.

**Juniper Grove, Poplarville:** Aug. 4-8; Shannon Marshall, preaching; Clyde Sellers, music; homecoming, Aug. 8.

**Antioch, Prentiss:** Aug. 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Joe Blackwell, Tylertown, evangelist; Wilmer Holifield, Taylorsville, music; Larry W. Yarber, pastor.

**Magee's Creek, Jayess:** Aug. 9-11; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Russell Bush, evangelist; Hubert Greer, music.

**Parkway, Morton:** Aug. 26-29; Thurs.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Jr. Richie, Pontotoc, evangelist; Tony Massey, Parkway Church, music; James Pender, pastor.

**Anding, Benton:** July 25-28; Sunday, 11 a.m., noon luncheon, and 1:30 p.m. singing; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Kerry Burrough, evangelist; Glen

Martin, music; Joe K. Hill, pastor.

**Ludlow, Ludlow:** July 25-30; Sunday, 11 a.m.; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m. Ben Carlisle, Pascagoula, evangelist; Billy Charles Beavers, Ludlow Church, music; M. L. Wallace, pastor.

**Blythe Creek, Mathiston:** Aug. 1-4; Sunday, 11 a.m., lunch served in fellowship hall, and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Doug Wise, Louisville, evangelist; Steve and Becky Carver, Mathiston, music; Danny Irvin, pastor.

**Enon (Walthall):** July 25-30; Sunday, worship, 10 a.m., meal, service at noon; Mon.-Fri., 7 p.m.; Leon Dunn, Hammond, La., evangelist; John Bell, Opp, Ala.; Barry Cutrer, pastor.

## JUST FOR THE RECORD



Flynt and Metzner

**Baptist Health Systems (BHS)** was recently presented with the "Crystal Cornea" Award by the Mississippi Lions Eye and Tissue Bank for having the most cornea donations in the state. **Shown** (from left) holding the award are Lions Eye and Tissue Bank president Mike Flynt and BHS CEO Kurt Metzner.



## BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

**William Carey College** students working with the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board directing children's camps in the Ukraine are Aaron Bilbo, Pascagoula; Paige Etheridge, Marion; Dana Oswalt, Mathiston; Heather Robinson, Brandon; Kyle Schenkewitz, Pascagoula; and Patricia Sullivan, Mt. Olive. Joshua Vanderbrink, Slidell, La., is serving a ten-week tour of backpacking and prayer walking in Malaysia. Karen Seamans, Livingston, La., is working as an English language teacher in Australia. Students working with the Gulfshore Baptist Assembly are Richard Bryant, Beaumont; Shannon Daughtry, Columbia; Dee Norwood, Pelahatchie; Joy Pickering, Seminary; Othan Pipkins, Beaumont; and Mandy Trammell, Florence.

Ashley Fitzhugh, Pine Grove, La., is working as a counselor for the Gulf/West Traveling Team of Centrifuge. Jon Gillis, Florence, is serving as Certifuge camp pastor at Ridgcrest Conference Center, North Carolina.

**Honor graduates** at graduation recently held at Blue Mountain College were Laura Green, Ripley; Freda Braddock, Ripley; Elizabeth Dunlap, New Albany; Meredith Carter, Blue Mountain; Michelle Wiesing,

Ripley; Pam Vegas, Baldwin; Tina Hooker, Thaxton; Paula Cox, Blue Mountain; Barbara McCormick, Houlika; Jennifer Rodgers, Pittsboro; Misty Mullins, Walnut; Stephanie Tisdale, Memphis, Tenn.; Amanda Grubbs, Pontotoc; Holly Kuykendall, Belmont; Kendra Moody, Belmont; Amanda Harris, Corinth; Amy Hill, Ripley; Marcy Clifton, Ripley; Dawn Hilliard, Walnut; Matthew Brown, Fulton; Teresa Phifer, Fulton; and Jenny Brooks, Corinth.

**Baptist Health Systems (BHS)** employees recently completed their sixth Habitat for Humanity house on Whitfield Street in Jackson. The house will be occupied by Manda Vaughan (center), a BHS employee. Vaughan is assisted at a ribbon cutting ceremony and dedication by BHS CEO Kurt Metzner (left), and executive vice president Jerry Cotton (right).



Commencement exercises were held at Blue Mountain College for 104 students on May 2.

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## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Joy in restored relationships

2 Corinthians 7:2-16

By Ted Dukes

The Apostle Paul asked the church to make room for him in their hearts, saying "We have wronged... corrupted... defrauded no man" (v. 2). Whatever his enemies might insinuate, Paul wanted to go on record as saying that no single member of the church could complain of injury, moral harm, or unfair treatment from him.

His defense of himself sounds familiar at this point (c.f. 1 Cor. 9:1-6; 2 Cor. 5:12; 6:3; 10:7-11), but what we must remember is that everything Paul hoped to accomplish for the cause of Christ was dependent upon his reputation and credibility among the Christian community. Slander is

a terrible thing, but it is a particularly grave matter in the ministry.

Paul reminded them again in verse 3, "I have you in my heart." While he has not actually said these exact words to the Corinthians in either of the two letters we have, he has nevertheless expressed the thought many times (3:2-3; 6:11-14; Phil. 1:7). He told the Thessalonians that he was ready to give them even his own life (1 Thess. 2:8), and now he assures the Corinthians of the same devotion and deep affection.

Paul was a man of boldness, as he admits in verse 4, and of great joy. He often said that he was filled with consolation, comfort, and exceeding great joy, even in



Dukes

the midst of affliction. Such is the signature of Christ on the life of a servant of God (John 15:11; Rom. 14:17; 2 Cor. 2:2-14; 6:10; Gal. 5:22; Phil. 2:17).

The Apostle catches the attention of every Christian who has ever suffered in verses 5-6.

He was afflicted with external difficulties as well as internal anxiety, so much so that his "flesh had no rest," but the Comforter of the humble brought joy in the midst of sadness.

Paul came from a tradition of prideful people where having one's act together, so to speak, was a virtue. Christ was the first to reveal the glory in being downcast and humble (Matt. 11:29; Luke 1:52). Paul had revolutionized his thinking to reflect the servant's heart of the Master.

It was Titus by whom Paul had sent his stern rebuke to the Corinthians, and the Apostle

rejoiced in the knowledge that the church had received Titus and trusted him. Upon their reunion, Paul is encouraged to learn that the "painful letter" had achieved the desired result — that the offenders and accusers in the church had been dealt with, and that the body of faith was experiencing a healthy sorrow and regret.

Jesus told us that we as Christians need to repent, (Luke 17:3-4), and Paul reiterated the point (12:21). The Bible's command that churches repent of wrong-doing is clearly illustrated in Jesus' command to four out of the seven churches of Asia addressed in the Revelation.

When we put our agenda ahead of God's, even though we cloak it in rational and noble motives, we sin. Whether in the life of an individual or in the collective life of a local body of believers, the word from God is, "Repent and restore your fellowship with Me."

It seems unthinkable to me that Paul would have to deal with this lack of support in the church, even from a small minority of people, and yet, this is the same phenomenon that manifests itself in every church at some time or another.

One of the most popular presidents in American history was Franklin Roosevelt who, in 1942 enjoyed an 84% approval rating. Most presidents endure 40-60% public support, some even less. No one has ever achieved 100% support from 100% of the people 100% of the time.

The Apostle Paul had to deal with a vocal minority that caused him considerable grief, but he did not allow those few to sever his relationship with the church.

Ulysses S. Grant said, "There are always more of them until they are counted."

Dukes is pastor of First Church, Crystal Springs.

## FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

### Creating a problem

Genesis 25:19-34; 27:1-40

By Grant Arinder

Often the story of a nation or family and its success or failure can be traced to one defining moment, an event that serves as a microcosm of all other events that follow. This is surely the case with the biblical accounts of Jacob and Esau — the sons of Isaac, the son of Abraham.

The narratives of Jacob and Esau in Genesis 25-35 can all be distilled to one important story that defines all their latter interactions. The birth narrative in Genesis 25 serves to define the future interactions of Jacob and Esau.

Isaac prayed for his barren wife Rebekah, and she became pregnant with twins. Scripture

reveals, that even in the womb the two brothers struggled with each other. The record of this struggle is important. It is included to define for the reader the future struggles between Jacob and Esau. Again, it is a microcosm of all that follows for the two.

When the brothers are born, Esau is born first, and therefore possesses all the privileges of the first born male. However, we then read that Jacob is born clutching at the heel of Esau. Again this scene is representative of all future interactions. The defining moments in Jacob's and Esau's lives revolve around Jacob clutching at that which rightfully belongs to



Arinder

Esau. Jacob is appropriately named as "one who deceives."

**Taking advantage (25:29-34).** An overview of the accounts of Esau and Jacob reveal their personalities. Esau is described as somewhat careless and shortsighted, more prone to make decisions based on immediate gratification rather than prudent planning.

Jacob on the other hand is described as intelligent and thoughtful, more prone to see the big picture and make decisions accordingly. Yet, he is not just smart and thoughtful, but also cunning and deceitful.

The interplay of these two personalities lead to events like the one described in this passage, "Once when Jacob was cooling some stew, Esau came in from the open country famished. He said to Jacob, 'Quick, let me have some of that red

stew! I'm famished!'" Esau was hungry. He wanted food and he wanted it now! Instead of giving it to him, Jacob seized the opportunity to take advantage of his desperate brother. He persuaded him to sell his birthright in exchange for the meal. Esau carelessly obliged.

**Practicing fraud (27:30-33).** The story of Jacob's deceitful ways continue. When Isaac was old and blind he called in his eldest son Esau. Isaac asked Esau, the hunter, to go and kill some game and prepare a meal for him (Isaac), so he could bestow his blessing upon him. Yet, Jacob conspires with Rebekah, who had overheard the conversation, to craftily steal Esau's blessing. Their plan to deceive Isaac succeeds, and Jacob steals Esau's blessing.

**Bitterness and division.** The deception, of course has its consequences. The words of verse 34 describe Esau's deep bitterness toward his brother. "When Esau

heard his father's words, he burst out with a loud and bitter cry..." The bitterness eventually leads to anger and division between the two. Esau plots to kill his brother in revenge, so Jacob is forced to flee the country.

It is true that before the brothers were born, God told Rebekah "the elder shall serve the younger" (25:23). God's choice of Jacob was an act of God's grace. While some may believe that Rebekah's and Jacob's actions were an effort to bring to pass what God had prophesied, we need not assume that God intended for them to use deceit and manipulation to accomplish his purposes.

Just as God incorporated into his plans the deceitful betrayal of Jesus by Judas (which was inspired by Satan), God in his greatness incorporated into his plans the ill-advised schemes of Rebekah and Jacob.

Arinder is pastor of First Church, Belzoni.

## LIFE AND WORK

### How can I strengthen my church?

Hebrews 10:24-25; 12:1-3; 13:1-3, 17-18

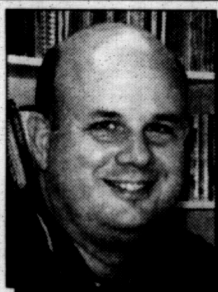
By Tony Martin

I had a dream a while back of serving a church where everyone was of one mind, where there was mutual love and respect, where you never heard critical, destructive comments, where the leadership was respected and trusted, and everyone was faithful to follow Christ.

Well, we may not experience that kind of assembly this side of glory, but there is in every church a group of people who have a real desire for their churches to grow and become stronger. May their tribe increase! These folks, and others, may not know what they

can do to strengthen their churches, but there are some simple actions they can take to make their churches wholesome and healthy and harmonious.

**Be present (10:24-25).** Fellowship with God should not be selfish. A church is a corporate body. Fellowship is a crucial part of the Christian walk. The writer of Hebrews must have been facing a situation where some of the less solid believers were not participating in church fellowship. Note that he is emphasizing not what a believer gets from meeting with others, but rather what he is able to contribute to the group.



Martin

We are all simply encouraged by meeting with others. That encouragement causes us to want to love others and perform selfless good works. The three great Christian virtues — faith, hope, and love — are seen as practical evidence of the benefit of being present in worship and fellowship.

**Be focused (12:1-3).** The writer of Hebrews, like Paul, often used athletic analogies. Athletes used to wear training weights to help them prepare for track and field events. Of course, they wouldn't actually run a race with those weights — they'd get rid of them. The runner should get rid of anything that would hinder maximum performance.

With any excess baggage shed, the runner would be free to focus on the matter at hand, the ultimate goal of winning the race.

Today, we are called to put

aside all things that hinder us from our focus on Jesus Christ himself. Fixing our eyes on Jesus describes our attitude of faith, and his example of endurance as he experienced the cross should inspire us to be tenacious and committed.

**Be loving (13:1-3).** We experience fellowship because of brotherly love. The deepest kind of fellowship is not based on family relationships, but on the unique spiritual life we experience in Christ. Part of that brotherly love is manifest in hospitality. In those days, when persecution drove many believers away from their homes, hospitality was a crucial ministry.

Even prisoners were singled out for special treatment. To minister to a Christian prisoner in Jesus' name was the same as ministering to Jesus himself. We are to pray for and love Christian prisoners all around the world.

In our churches, we should love one another as brothers

and sisters and express our love in acts of ministry.

**Be supportive (113:17-18).** Whenever one of God's servants — a pastor or other minister — is in the will of God, being faithful to his calling, then God's people should submit and obey.

Many people balk at the prospect of submission and obedience to their pastors. Pastors should never be dictators; this would be evidence of their lack of submission to God himself — the true head of the church.

However, it's dangerous for us to have a casual attitude toward pastoral authority. The pastor ultimately has to give an account of his ministry to the Lord himself, and is held to a high standard. We are to pray for ministers and ourselves alike and not be a burden to them.

If a shepherd is faithful to watch the sheep, then it is important that the sheep obey him.

Martin is minister of education at First Church, McComb.



# THE VILLAGE VIEW



Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director

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Clinton, MS 39060-0027  
(601) 922-2242  
e-mail: bcv1@misnet.com

## Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

### JUNE 1-30, 1999 HONORS

**Perry Atherton**  
Mrs. Virginia H. Atherton  
**Murray Basden**  
Julia R. Basden  
Elizabeth Duggar  
**Mr. Earl Batchelor**  
Ms. Anne Rutland  
**Justin Bond**  
Mr. & Mrs. Roger N. Bond  
**Lewis Bond**  
Mr. & Mrs. Roger N. Bond  
**Mr. Billy Bratcher**  
Ms. Sandy Bratcher  
**Earl Coleman**  
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**Mr. Steve Cook**  
Mrs. W. S. Cook  
**Mrs. Verble Dullinger**  
Mr. & Mrs. Conan Whitten  
**Carlton Edmondson, Jr.**  
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**Sylvia H. Hammett**  
Mr. Charles W. Holmes  
**Rev. & Mrs. Jeff Holland & Fam**  
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## Three BCV employees honored

The staff and residents of The Baptist Children's Village recently honored three employees of the India Nunnery campus for their dedicated service. All three of these men have been Christian leaders and role models for our residents.



Jon West has left the BCV to work as a Journeyman with the International Mission Board. He will be working with children in Botswana, Africa for the next two years.



John David Hewitt (left) and Michael Mote (right) are shown with Ronny Robinson, BCV executive director. Both men received certificates of honor. John David will be leaving The BCV to work at Mississippi College as an admissions counselor and Michael will be moving to Louisiana to continue his work with young people as a teacher and a coach.



# Faithful prayers leading family to salvation

STILLWATER, Okla. (BP) — The strip joint was across the street from where Susan Stephens banked. God impressed on her to pray for the business owner, which she did every time she went to the bank.

This continued for a year and a half. Stephens believed in the power of prayer. She had no idea, though, how many lives would be affected when God answered her prayers.

To date, 11 members of Jack Charles' family have been baptized into the membership of Stillwater's Eagle Heights Church, and more may come.

Charles, who owned the strip club, was not a Christian but he began to feel that it

was wrong to own such a business, so he sold it. Then, in February, his grandmother's death led him to start searching the Scriptures for truth.

Charles began reading books about near-death experiences. He talked a lot to his brother Ralph, a Christian who lives in Miami. Ralph and his family had been praying for Charles for 17 years.

"Every time I asked him something, he would say, 'You know, in the Bible...'" Charles recalled. Finally, he began reading the Bible on his own and soon accepted Jesus Christ as his personal savior.

On Feb. 14 he became a Christian, and made a public profession of faith Feb. 28. For six of the next seven weeks, one or more of his family members responded to the invitation.

On March 7 his wife Barbara, brother John, and niece Ashton accepted Christ. John's wife, Kamera, also was baptized; she had been a Christian for years but had never been baptized.

The following Sunday, March 14, Jack's parents, Ralph and Carol, made public professions. All seven were baptized March 21.

On March 28, his sister and brother-in-law, Cathy and Kirk Brown, also were saved. On April 4 his niece Morgan accepted Christ. On April 11 his aunt, Beverly Jean Bradley, made a profession. The four of them were baptized April 25.

"The funny thing is, most of them had been struggling with this for some time, but not me," Charles said. "I was so far away from God, that everyone was surprised when I got saved."

He said he talked to his family members about his faith, but "it was God who did all the work."

Charles said the best thing is the joy at family get-togethers. "When you hear Mom laugh for the first time for real, it is nice," he said. "It's good to see the family get together and not just be mean and cuss."

Charles' wife, Barbara, said she was "overwhelmed" when Charles became a Christian. She started reading the Bible, listening to Christian music, and was led to the Lord.

Since then, another woman at work and her supervisor have been saved, "so it's going around in my department."

His brother John said his grandmother's death "led Jack on a rampage. We had about a six-hour conversation and he started telling me what to read."

He said he began reading his Bible at work, which has caused his co-workers to "treat me like an alcoholic; everybody looks at me different."

John's wife, Kamera, said she was saved while living in Hobart, but had never been baptized. She said God had been with her through some tough times as a child, and had protected her family even when they were far from him.

Their daughter, Ashton, 12, was saved at the same time as John. She talked with her dad, then went to Sunday School that week.

When her friend Amanda asked if she were to die, and Jesus asked "Why should I let you into Heaven?" Ashton replied, "I think I know, but I might not have it all together: Because he died for me and because he is my savior."

She accepted Jesus, as did her friend Shelly. The girls also led another friend, who was a Buddhist, to Christ. That girl said she will not be baptized, though, until her parents become Christians, too.

The whole family said everyone is more at ease than ever before, and family get-togethers are more joyful than they ever were in the past.

Bradley made a public profession April 11 and was baptized April 25. The members of Eagle Heights Church are now waiting for the next member of the Charles family to be saved.



**NEW CHRISTIANS** — It's 11 members and counting for the Jack Charles family, as all came to Christ over a seven-week period and were baptized into the fellowship of Eagle Heights Church in Stillwater, Okla. Shown left to right are (standing) Kamera, Ashton, John, Morgan, Barbara, Jack and Ralph Charles, (sitting) Beverly Bradley, Carol Charles and Cathy and Kirk Brown. They are shown attending groundbreaking ceremonies for Eagle Heights April 18. (BP photo)

## Baptists gearing up for 2000 Olympics in Sydney

SYDNEY, Australia (BP) — American and Australian Baptists are shooting hoops and honing their soccer skills in preparation for the 2000 Summer Olympic Games in Sydney, Australia — but they're not out to win medals.

They're out to win souls. All 330 Baptist churches in New South Wales are joining forces to create "Reach Out 2000," an evangelistic outreach to the 3 million international visitors expected to pack Sydney for the Olympics.

Led by general superintendent Phil Skinner, these churches will partner with an estimated 1,000 volunteers from Southern Baptist churches in the United States to lead sports clinics, street drama, construction teams, and more — all in the name of Christ.

With the games drawing closer, Baptists everywhere are picking up the pace, said Cheryl Wolfinger, sports evangelism consultant for the International Sports Federation, which recruits and promotes sports evangelism projects on behalf of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Since sports will be a focal point of the Olympics, sports evangelism will be the ticket to getting through to non-believ-

ers. With 3 million visitors on the way, volunteers will have a wonderful opportunity to make a strategic impact for God's kingdom, organizers say.

"One of the main things [Australian Baptists] will do is receive volunteer teams from Sept. 15 to Oct. 1 [2000]," Wolfinger said. "All summer long there will be sports clinics."

Churches will volunteer for basketball, softball, soccer and American football clinics. We want to undergird the work they're already doing."

The clinics use sports as a platform for sharing the Gospel.

"College students will be sent to disciple participants. Younger children sign up for drills, improve their skills, and go through an evangelistic station where the leader gives his or her testimony," she said. "[The churches] are so excited."

The idea is catching on among Australians, she said. Case in point: a 115-member Baptist church transformed its building into a "cutting-edge" sports complex for evangelistic clinics. Membership has climbed to more than 600.

In addition to sports ministry, Reach Out 2000 is mobilizing Baptists to touch the transient Olympic crowd.

"We're helping [Australians] realize that the world is coming to their back door," she said.

are vacationing, sightseeing, and relishing the chance to meet and talk.

"The Olympics is the only thing that's worldwide with no barriers," she said. "[It] is the single event that brings the entire world together in a peaceful setting."

Reach Out 2000 also will give Australia, which is less than 2% evangelical Christian, a chance to see Christ's love demonstrated by Baptists.

Only 11% of the nation's population attends church. Traditional churches like Anglicans and Lutherans are on the decline and New Age religions and Scientology groups are popping up in their places. Baptist churches are growing slowly.

For more information, contact Wolfinger at (800) 999-2889, ext. 1512.



Plans are in the works for mass distribution of tracts in downtown Sydney, coupled with backyard Bible clubs, street drama, touring choirs, and other general evangelism projects in strategic locations.

During a festive season like the Olympics, Wolfinger said there is an "incredible openness" among people. People

### Bibliocipher

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WKY RNUS RNWR JDVM-  
NCI NCT TLMR JDVMNCI  
NCT CK MICVCR WKY CK  
RVLRN.

FDNK BDLV: RJUKRS-BDLV

Clue: J = W

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Luke Twenty-Four: Thirty-Nine.